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WINCANTON
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH

FOR THE
YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER 1954

Wincanton,
Somerset.

June, 1955.

To the
Rural District Council of Wincanton

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to lay before you my Annual Report for the year 1954.

1.—GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	64,540
Population (1954)	...	...	...	...	...	17,600
Number of inhabited houses (1954)	...	...	...	...	...	5,579
Rateable Value (31st March, 1954)	...	...	...	...	...	£82,259
Net Product of Penny Rate (1954)	...	...	...	...	...	£331/11/11

2.—EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

BIRTHS

		Males	Females
Live Births	Total	134	118
	Legitimate	128	112
	Illegitimate	6	6
Still Births	Total	1	0
	Legitimate	1	0
	Illegitimate	0	0

DEATHS

Death from all causes: Total, 228. Males, 115. Females, 113.
Death Rate, 11.4 per 1,000.

Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth:

(a) from sepsis	...	...	...	nil
(b) from other causes	...	...	...	nil

Deaths of Infants under one year of age:

				Males	Females
Total	...	...	...	4	3
Legitimate	...	...	...	3	3
Illegitimate	...	...	...	1	0

			Males	Females
Deaths of Infants	under one week	... ..	3	2
„	„	from one to four weeks		
		(inclusive)	1	0
„	„	from one to six months	0	0
„	„	from six to twelve months	0	1
Total			4	3
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	... ..	...	...	... nil
„	„	Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	... nil
„	„	Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	...	... nil

There has not been any excessive mortality during the year.

The total number of Deaths occurring in the District was 228, compared with 199 in 1953.

The chief causes of Death were:

Old Age	... ..	26	Cancer	... ..	47
Heart and Circulatory			Intra-Cranial Vascular		
Diseases	... ..	76	Lesions	... ..	37

In all "Causes of Death":

Those dying between the ages of 75 and 80 were 42

„ „ „ „ „ 81 „ 85 „ 40

„ „ „ „ „ 86 „ 90 „ 18

„ „ over the age of 90 were 14

A total of 114 or 50 per cent of the total Deaths.

3.—NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR

Disease	Total Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	31	2	0
Measles	3	0	0
Whooping Cough	22	0	0
Pneumonia	7	0	3
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	1	0
Food Poisoning	3	0	0
Tuberculosis:			
(a) Respiratory	11	0	2
(b) Non-Respiratory	3	0	0

Notification of Infectious Diseases by Medical Practitioners was very satisfactory.

School closed

The Milborne Port County School was closed from 20/12/54 (p.m.) to 22/12/54 (inclusive), owing to the prevalence of streptococcal throats.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum

No case notified.

4.—CAUSES OF SICKNESS

There was an outbreak of Scarlet Fever in the parish of Milborne Port in November and December.

5.—SUMMARY OF NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITAL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE IN THE DISTRICT

A.—Professional Nursing in the Home

- (1) **General.**—There are ten nurses in the district engaged in general district work who are affiliated to the County Nursing Association, and between them they cover the whole district.
- (2) **For Infectious Diseases.**—Some of the cases of infectious diseases were removed to Isolation Hospitals, the remainder were either nursed by their relatives or by nurses obtained from Nursing Homes or Hospitals outside the district.

B.—Midwives

There are ten certified midwives practising in the district.

C.—Clinics and Treatment Centres

In Wincanton there are ophthalmic and dental clinics provided and staffed by the County Council.

D.—Hospitals available for the District

- (1) **Tuberculosis.**—None.
- (2) **Fever.**—None.
- (3) **Other.**—(a) There is a Cottage Hospital at Wincanton, known as the “Wincanton and East Somerset Memorial Hospital”, for the treatment of general, medical and surgical cases.
(b) There is a Cottage Hospital at Templecombe, known as the “Merthyr Guest Memorial Hospital”, for the treatment of Maternity cases.
(c) There is a Public Assistance Institution at Wincanton for the aged and infirm under the Public Assistance Committee of the County Council, and the Regional Hospital Board.
(d) A Hospital at Wincanton, known as “Verrington Hospital”, for aged persons, suffering from chronic ailments.

E.—Institutional Provision for Unmarried Mothers, Illegitimate Infants and Homeless Children

The only Institutions for any of the above are the Public Assistance Institution and Rodber House, Wincanton (for boys only), which are under the control of the Public Assistance Committee of the County Council. Rodber House is due to close early in 1955.

F.—Ambulance Facilities

- (1) **For Infectious Cases.**—None in the District.
- (2) **For Non-Infectious and Accident Cases.**—There is a British Red Cross Society Ambulance, staffed by British Red Cross personnel, kept at Castle Cary. In addition, Ambulances from Shepton Mallet and Gillingham, Dorset, have been used as occasion requires.

H.—Scabies

No cases have been brought to my notice.

6.—LABORATORY WORK

Examination of bacteriological and pathological specimens are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory at Taunton, and considerable use of this laboratory has been made during the year.

A supply of diphtheria antitoxin is kept at Messrs. Knight and Sons (Chemists), Wincanton, and is supplied to Practitioners on the National Health Service Prescription Form.

7.—PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

The Public Health Department consists of the Senior Sanitary Inspector, two additional Sanitary Inspectors, one junior Technical Assistant, one Clerical Assistant, one Shorthand-Typist, all whole-time officers, and myself (a part-time officer).

There are also two Health Visitors in the District.

8.—WATER SUPPLIES

The water supplies of the area have been generally satisfactory in quality. The private supply at Stowell, which has for long been a cause of anxiety, was finally superseded by the Council's supply in September.

There has been, however, an increase in the number of unsatisfactory samples, the cause of which is probably due to a greater degree of surface contamination due to the wet season. This justifies the extension of chlorination, proposed in the future proposals.

Regular bacteriological and certain chemical examinations have been made of the water supplies with the results set out in the following table:

Raw Water				Treated after going into Supply			
Bacteriological		Chemical		Bacteriological		Chemical	
Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Public 29	16	6	—	44	13	5	—
Private 4	5	—	1	12	3	—	—

(The above Chemical Analyses refer to the following supplies: Bruton, Castle Cary, Charlton Horethorne, Charlton Horethorne (Sigwells), Charlton Musgrove, Penselwood, Pitcombe, South Brewham, Sparkford, Templecombe and Wincanton (Old Lake supply).

Water Supplies from Public Mains:

Direct to the Houses		By means of Standpipes	
No. of Dwelling Houses	Population (Estimated)	No. of Dwelling Houses	Population (Estimated)
5,003	15,100	29	85

No. of parishes with piped water supply:

(i) from public mains, 29; (ii) from private reservoirs, 2.

No. of parishes without a piped supply of water:

Nil.

The Public Water Supplies liable to have plumbo-solvent action are Bruton, South Brewham, Charlton Musgrove and, to a lesser extent, Penselwood. At Charlton Musgrove the water is passed over Magnesite, but the efficiency of this treatment is open to question.

A liming plant is available for use at Penselwood when required. No treatment is undertaken at Brewham. The provision of treatment for the Bruton supply has been approved in principle.

It has been decided to adopt Byelaws (Sec. 17 Water Act, 1945).

General Observations

The proportion of the population supplied from public supplies is high. The demand for both Domestic and Agricultural use tends to increase and this, together with the shortages arising, and with certain unsatisfactory private systems, indicate a need for a large increase of supply.

Chlorination

Chlorination of the Penselwood (including Wincanton), Templecombe, Bruton and Castle Cary supplies has been maintained throughout the year.

At Bruton six samples contained *B. coli* and it seemed probable that this contamination arose from the Pitcombe source, which also gave unsatisfactory results at this time. The Castle Cary water contained *B. coli* on four occasions.

Water Supplies from Wells

No samples were taken for analysis.

No. of cases in which a piped supply was substituted for well water	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
No. of cases in which a piped supply was substituted for other private sources	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	53
No. of cases in which a piped supply was substituted for a standpipe supply	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
No. of houses relying on well supplies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	85
No wells were closed during the year.								

Extensions or improvements of Supplies during the year

The mains have been extended to serve Stowell, where the private supply, long unsatisfactory, became quite unusable after pollution from a silage pit, at a cost of £2,256.15.0.

Future Proposals

The scheme now proposed envisages a consumption of 390 million gallons per annum, divided equally between domestic and non-domestic use.

The sources proposed are those existing at Bruton, Castle Cary, Milborne Port, Penselwood and Pitcombe and a new source from Thornford in the Sherborne Rural District. For the coming year, the work proposed includes development at Bradley Head, Salters Hill, Riding Gate, Charlton Musgrove and Cuckoo Hill, at a cost of approximately £90,000.

9.—DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Parishes with main drainage and efficient disposal systems: Ansford, Bruton, Castle Cary, Henstridge, Milborne Port, Queen Camel, South Barrow, Sparkford and Wincanton.

Particulars of extensions, major renewals and future proposals are set out in the appended report from the Senior Sanitary Inspector.

10.—HOUSING

	Houses erected during year		Houses in course of erection		Conversions to flats or dwellings		Lost from conversions of 2 or more houses to 1
	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Temp.	
Local Authority	73	—	20	—	—	—	—
Private Enterprise	16	—	9	—	5	—	4
County Council:							
Smallholdings	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Standing Joint Committee	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
	91	—	29	—	5	—	4

No. of post-war houses erected from 1st April, 1945 to 31st December, 1954		Programme for the period 1st Sept., 1954 to 31st Aug., 1955
By Local Authority	By Private Enterprise	Local Authority
565	103	20 (Traditional)
Plus C.C.:		
(S/holding) 3		
(S.J.Cte.) 1		

Total number of houses in the District ... 5,579
Total number of houses owned by Local Authority ... 1,431

Unfit Houses

- (a) Number of unfit houses in the District, but on which no formal action has been taken ... 420
- (b) Number of houses that have been condemned under the Housing Acts as totally unfit ... 25
- (c) Number of houses occupied under:
- (a) ... 300
- (b) ... 25

No houses were found to be overcrowded during the year.

Number of houses required:

- (i) to replace those unfit under (a) ... 300
- to replace those unfit under (b) ... 25
- (ii) to abate overcrowding ... Nil
- (iii) to overcome unsatisfactory conditions, e.g. two families living in the same house but not included in (i) or (ii) ... 200

The general effect of section 9 of the Housing Act, 1954 is to lower the standard of housing operations in this District.

It is proposed, however, to continue to deal statutorily with the worst of the houses as the rebuilding programme makes it possible to rehouse the tenants.

Grants made under the Housing Act, 1949

Applications in respect of 38 houses were received and dealt with as shown in the appended report by the Senior Sanitary Inspector (page 17).

Camping Sites

Number of Camping Sites (Permanent)	...	...	...	1
Acreage of Site ...	...	...	...	4.1
Maximum number allowed per acre (caravans)	...	...	...	7
Estimated number of campers during the year (average)	...	...	...	15

11.—FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS

One (three persons).

12.—PUBLIC INQUIRIES

A Public Inquiry for confirmation of the under-mentioned Clearance Order made by the Council under the Housing Acts, 1936 to 1949, was held at Wincanton on May 27th, 1954: Chapel Yard, Wincanton.

The above was confirmed by the Minister.

13.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Milk

(a) Total number of Registered Dairies	...	...	...	7
(b) Total number of Registered Distributors in the area	...	...	...	9
(c) Number of Supplementary licences issued to dealers whose dairy is outside your area ...	...	...	...	4

Milk Sampling

No samples were taken by my Department during the year.

Ice Cream

No. of premises registered for:

(a) Manufacture and retail...	...	...	...	3
(b) Manufacture only	...	...	...	Nil
(c) Retail only	...	...	...	45

Number of samples taken

		Hot Mix	Cold Mix
Grade 1	...	—	—
Grade 2	...	—	—
Grade 3	...	—	—
Grade 4	...	—	—

Premises where food is prepared

No. registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938	23
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Byelaws under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938

Date byelaws came into operation	31/7/50
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The premises are subject to routine inspection and informal action has secured the desired result.

14.—SLAUGHTER HOUSES

(a) No. in use under Ministry of Food	...	...	...	1
(b) No. owned or leased by Local Authority	...	...	...	—
(c) Private slaughter-houses: 4. Operating	...	...	...	3
(d) Bacon factories: 1. Operating	...	...	...	1
(e) No. in use where horses are slaughtered for human consumption	...	...	...	—

Total number of animals slaughtered during year under:
(a) Nil; (b) Nil; (c) 1971; (d) 9911.

Names of any in use under Ministry of Food:
South Western Dairies Co., Ltd., Bacon Factory, Bruton.

Records are kept of carcasses or parts condemned.

Every effort is made to inspect all animals slaughtered for sale for human consumption, even though this entails working overtime or on Sundays.

Knackers Yards

Number Registered: 1, at Yenston, Templecombe.

15.—SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS

No. in area:

(a) Privately owned	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
(b) Owned by Local Authority	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil

Estimated average number of bathers daily during season:
25—50.

Water used for filling pool:
River Brue—Constant flow.

No purification plant is installed, but water treated with Chloride of Lime and Copper Sulphate at intervals.

This Pool is owned by the Governors of King's School, Bruton.
Samples taken: Nil.

16.—FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948

Part I of the Act

1.—Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	20	7		
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	87	52		
TOTAL	107	59		

2.—Cases in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7):					
(a) Insufficient ...	—	1	—	1	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	—	1	—	1	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	1	1	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	1	3	—	2	—

Part VIII of the Act

OUTWORK

(Sections 110 and 111)

Nature of Work	Section 110			Section 111		
	No. of out- workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending list to the Council	No. of prosecu- tions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwhole- some premises	Notices served	Prose- cutions
Wearing apparel —Making, etc. Cleaning ...	202	—	—	—	—	—

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

T. E. COULSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

Council Offices,
Wincanton,
Somerset.
15th June, 1955.

T. E. COULSON, Esq., M.D., F.R.C.S.E.,
Medical Officer of Health
Balsam Gate,
Wincanton.

Sir,

I beg to submit my Annual Report for the Year ended 31st December, 1954.

The total number of inspections was 5,014, which included the following:

Public Health Acts

Camping Sites	...	...	...	...	...	...	40
Dangerous Buildings	...	...	...	...	...	...	34
Drainage, Sewers and Sewage Disposal	...	...	...	...	...	...	904
Infectious Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Nuisances	...	...	...	...	...	...	266
Refuse and Salvage	...	...	...	...	...	...	310
Water Supplies	164

New Buildings

Byelaws and Town Planning and Building Licensing	1,370
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Housing	535
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Food and Drugs Act

Meat Inspection	583
Food Premises	197
Milk and Dairies	16

Slaughter of Animals	4
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Shops	10
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Rodent Control	21
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Petroleum	174
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Factories	59
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Miscellaneous	311
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5,014

WATER SUPPLIES

Population Served by Piped Water Supplies

Parish	Population Census		Total No. of houses	Public Supplies				Private Supplies	
				Supplied by pipe		Supplied by standpipe			
	1931	1951		No. of houses	Est. Pop.	No. of houses	Est. Pop.	No. of houses	Est. Pop.
Alford ..	102	76	24	24	80	—	—	—	—
Ansford ..	305	506	171	168	496	—	—	1	3
Bratton Seymour	98	145	36	29	117	—	—	7	29
Bruham ..	378	443	131	119	404	4	10	4	16
Bruton.. ..	1,553	1,614	540	526	1,576	—	—	9	27
Castle Cary ..	1,664	1,575	607	591	1,606	—	—	15	40
Charlton Horethorne	463	492	155	135	431	8	25	9	29
Charlton Musgrove	377	359	121	108	323	—	—	5	15
Compton Pauncefoot	208	178	61	25	75	—	—	36	108
Corton Denham	228	222	69	1	3	—	—	65	213
Cucklington ..	211	219	68	64	208	—	—	3	10
Henstridge ..	1,040	1,096	375	353	1,037	10	30	3	9
Holton ..	233	209	76	63	180	—	—	10	30
Horsington ..	611	611	176	138	479	—	—	19	66
Lovington ..	189	201	55	55	203	—	—	—	—
Maperton ..	125	102	37	29	81	—	—	5	14
Milborne Port	1,655	1,637	569	562	1,632	—	—	6	15
North Barrow	94	85	27	27	86	—	—	—	—
North Cadbury	690	704	215	106	344	—	—	94	309
North Cheriton	178	157	63	61	153	—	—	1	3
Penselwood ..	285	254	89	77	221	—	—	6	17
Pitcombe ..	457	344	119	99	296	—	—	17	50
Queen Camel	472	522	175	162	485	—	—	2	6
Shepton Montague	231	205	64	45	150	—	—	5	16
South Barrow	86	115	41	41	116	—	—	—	—
South Cadbury	294	268	92	3	9	—	—	76	227
Sparkford ..	380	397	133	128	383	—	—	5	15
Stoke Trister ..	291	305	105	99	281	—	—	3	9
Templecombe..	871	1,015	341	330	991	7	21	3	9
Wincanton ..	2,047	2,537	793	792	2,556	—	—	—	—
Yarlington ..	149	158	52	43	132	—	—	4	12
	15,965	16,751	5,579	5,003	15,134	29	86	413	1,297

SEWERAGE

No complaint has arisen concerning the effluent of the Henstridge or Wincanton Sewage Works.

The effluents from the Sewage Works at Bruton, Castle Cary, Milborne Port and Sparkford have given generally satisfactory results on analysis of samples taken by the River Board Inspectors without prior notice.

Alford

The length of defective sewer has been relaid at a cost of £460.

Bruton

The Engineers' proposals for the reconstruction of the sewage works are in preparation.

Plans for a sewer extension to serve Sunnyhill School, Pitcombe have been approved and the contract let.

Castle Cary

The relaying of the Fore Street sewer has been deferred until 1955.

Milborne Port

A short length of sewer has been laid at Combe Hill in substitution for a private sewer, at a cost of £260.

North Cadbury

A length of defective sewer in Woolston Road and High Street has been relaid at a cost of £342.

North Cheriton

A new sewer has been laid to serve the Red Lion area. This is an advance portion of the North Cheriton scheme now in course of preparation.

South Barrow

New disposal works have been provided at a cost of £625.

Stoke Trister

The public sewer has been extended to serve an additional house at Bayford at a cost of £50.

Templecombe

The new sewerage scheme has received provisional approval of the Ministry and work is anticipated to start in 1955.

Wincanton

A length of defective sewer in West Hill has been relaid at a cost of £700.

HOUSING

During the year the Housing (Repairs and Rents) Act came into force.

This Act sets a new standard of fitness for houses and makes provision for the raising of rents if houses are certified by the Council to be in a good state of repair and decoration. No applications for such certificates have been made.

The new standard of fitness appears to represent a lower standard than has hitherto operated in this District. Ultimately the operative standard develops as the result of County Court decisions.

The general pattern of housing development is becoming clearer.

The fact that the Council own a large proportion of houses is inevitably leading to consideration whether or not there should be a maximum limit in this direction. So far, however, the change of emphasis by the Government towards private development has not yet had any noticeable effect.

If local authority building is to be eased every encouragement must be given to individuals to build their own houses. The high cost of building is causing many potential house builders to halt, and the difficulties of site acquisition at reasonable prices is another important deterrent.

The following table gives details of the houses erected during the year:

PARISH	TRADITIONAL							Somerset County Council	
	Flats		Bun- galows	Non- Parlour	Parlour	Total	P/E		
	F.2	F.4	S.S.6	N.P.4	U.P.5			Small- holdings	
Alford	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	—	—
Ansford	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Bratton Seymour	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Bruton	—	4	—	—	—	4	1	1	—
Castle Cary ..	12	—	—	2	—	14	1	—	1
Charlton									
Musgrove	—	—	—	4	—	4	1	—	—
Henstridge ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Milborne Port ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
North Cadbury	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—
North Cheriton	—	—	—	4	—	4	—	—	—
Penselwood ..	—	—	2	2	—	4	—	—	—
Pitcombe	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Queen Camel ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
South Barrow ..	—	—	—	6	—	6	—	—	—
Shepton									
Montague	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Stoke Trister ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Templecombe ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Wincanton	17	—	6	6	6	35	2	—	—
	29	4	8	26	6	73	16	1	1

The high cost of land acquisition and of building increases the value of older property and many houses which are quite irreparable at a reasonable cost of letting are being repaired for owner-occupation. The immediate effect of this is that many houses, scheduled as unfit, will ultimately be reconditioned instead of demolished.

If the local authority programme of rehousing is to have the maximum effect in improving the standard of housing in the district, very great care will have to be exercised in siting the new houses and filling vacancies, so that these may operate in conjunction with the Slum Clearance programme.

Further progress has been made in Slum Clearance with the confirmation by the Ministry of the Wincanton (Chapel Yard) Clearance Area, including five houses.

Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925

(1)	The number of houses which on inspection were considered to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	36
(2)	The number of houses the defects in which were remedied in consequence of informal action by the local authority or their officers	...	...	...	...	11
(3)	The number of representations made to the local authority with a view to:					
	(a) the serving of notices requiring the execution of works					—
	or					
	(b) the making of closing or demolition orders	...	...			3
	or					
	(c) the inclusion of houses in a clearance area	...	...			1
(4)	The number of notices served requiring the execution of works	...	...	...	...	—
(5)	The number of houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices	...	...	...	...	4
(6)	The number of demolition or closing orders made (including Clearance Areas)	...	...	...	...	5
(7)	The number of houses in respect of which an undertaking was accepted under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936					2
(8)	The number of houses demolished	...	...	...	...	3

Requisitioning

The occupants of ex-W.D. huts at West Hill, Wincanton and Millbrook, Castle Cary have been rehoused and the huts demolished. Only five properties remain under requisition.

Licensing

The number of unfit houses under licence for temporary occupation at the end of the year was eleven, as against eighteen for last year.

Improvement Grants

The policy of making Improvement Grants in all suitable cases has been continued and I append a table showing the progress since the commencement of the scheme.

A number of the schemes have been substantially completed and only await completion of minor items at the end of the maintenance period.

Housing Act, 1949—Improvement Grants

Number of houses involved in:

	Applications						Approvals				Resulting in houses		
	Re- ceived	Aban- doned	With- drawn	Re- fused	Ap- proved	Under Con- sider- ation	Aban- doned	Com- pleted	Work in Hand	Total	Saved	Gain'd	Lost
Agricultural Cottages	22	—	—	—	18	4	1	4	13	18	1	—	—
Owner/occupied	11	—	1	2	4	4	—	4	—	4	—	1	—
Others ..	5	—	—	—	4	1	—	1	3	4	—	—	—
TOTALS	38	—	1	2	26	9	1	9	23	26	1	1	—

Overcrowding

Cases outstanding, 1st January, 1954	...	...	...	3
New cases discovered	...	...	...	—
Cases abated during the year	...	...	...	3

Movable Dwellings

Nine new licences have been issued.
Eight licences have been renewed.

Notifiable Disease

Disinfection has been carried out in eleven cases, excluding the Milborne Port Schools.
The steam disinfector at Verrington Hospital has been used twice during the year for disinfection of bedding.

STATUTORY AND INFORMAL ACTION

In addition to the 44 Informal Notices outstanding at the beginning of the year, 57 have been served. Of the total of 101, 1 has been withdrawn, 4 followed up by Statutory action, and 55 complied with.
Seven Statutory Notices have been served; one under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, three under the Public Health Act, and three under the Housing Acts. The Notice served under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, the three served under the Public Health Act, together with six under the Housing Acts (including three brought forward from 1953) have been complied with.
The following is a summary of the results obtained:

Remedied

Defective Sewers and Drains	...	...	...	...	7
Overflowing and leaky Cesspools	...	...	...	...	14
Defective, insanitary or insufficient closets:					
(a) at dwellings	...	...	...	...	2
(b) at factories	...	...	...	...	3
(c) at inns	...	...	...	...	2

Dangerous or dilapidated premises	...	...	...	2
Miscellaneous nuisances	...	...	...	4
Contraventions—Food and Drugs Act	...	...	...	17
Milk and Dairies Regulations	...	...	...	4
Petroleum Regulations	...	...	...	1
Rodent infestations cleared	...	...	...	3

Other Results

Housing Acts—Houses made fit	...	...	...	13
Undertakings not to use accepted	...	...	...	2
Houses demolished	...	...	...	3
Houses lost by conversion	...	...	...	4

Smoke Abatement

One case of smoke nuisance has been abated.

HOUSE REFUSE AND SALVAGE

The House Refuse and Salvage Scheme continues to operate satisfactorily by direct labour. Two ten cubic yard side-loading vehicles are used.

Weekly collections are made in Ansford, Bruton, Castle Cary, Milborne Port and Wincanton, involving an estimated population of 7,000.

The remainder of the District, with the exception of a few outlying and isolated premises, is covered each fortnight.

Charges are made for the collection of trade refuse.

The two refuse dumps used are at Wincanton and Bowden.

Further progress has been made with the preparatory work at the new tip and it will come into use early in 1955.

The quantity of salvage has been maintained but lower prices have reduced the gross receipts by £58. A slight increase in price for 1955 will, I hope, correct this trend.

The following table gives the Salvage Sales for the past three years:

	Tons			Value		
	1954	1953	1952	£ 1954	£ 1953	£ 1952
Paper ...	178.75	175.99	129.3	1218.15	1237.86	1369.5
Ferrous Metals ...	14.35	15.54	44.9	44.3	53.12	182.3
Non-Ferrous Metals	0.25	0.60	—	14.95	35.25	—
Textiles ...	4.9	4.63	9.9	91.55	99.95	229.5
Bones ...	0.19	0.31	0.3	0.9	1.53	1.8
	198.44	197.07	184.4	1369.85	1427.71	1783.1

Closet Accommodation

There were 13 conversions from earth, and one from vault, to water closets during the year.

Public Conveniences

There are five public conveniences in the district, one each at Bruton, Castle Cary and Milborne Port, and two at Wincanton.

FOOD

(1)	The total number of food premises in the District is	...	...	...	...	...	...	225
	This total is made up as follows:							
	Hotels and Public Houses	...	...	...	...	...	58	
	Grocery Stores (includes greengroceries and village general stores)	...	...	...	...	...	71	
	Butcheries	...	...	...	...	...	16	
	Confectioneries (including sweets, cakes and ice-cream)	...	...	...	...	...	19	
	Cafes	...	...	...	...	...	16	
	Fried Fish and Wet Fish shops	...	...	...	...	...	7	
	Licensed Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	5	
	Egg Packing and Poultry Plucking stations	...	...	...	...	...	1	
	Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	6	
	Canteens (including one school kitchen)	...	...	...	...	...	5	
	Bakeries	...	...	...	...	...	21	
							—	225
(2)	The number of Food premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, is							*66
	Groceries (sale of ice-cream)	...	...	...	...	...	21	
	Confectioneries (sale of ice-cream)	...	...	...	...	...	15	
	Dairies (sale of ice-cream)	...	...	...	...	...	1	
	Works Canteens (sale of ice-cream)	...	...	...	...	...	1	
	Cafes (sale of ice-cream)	...	...	...	...	...	10	
							—	48
	Fried Fish shops and cafes registered for fried fish (2)	...	...	...	...	...	7	
							—	7
	Butchers' shops (sausage making)	...	...	...	...	...	12	
	Bacon factories (sausage making)	...	...	...	...	...	1	
							—	13
							—	*68
	(*Two premises are each registered under two headings.)							
	No. of registered Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
	No. of inspections of Registered Food premises...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14

SHOPS ACT, 1950

The County Council continued the delegation of their powers under section 38, sub-sections (3), (4) and (5) of the Act, which deal with lighting, facilities for meals and for washing. Inspections have been made in ten cases but no contraventions have been found.

MEAT

Following the abandonment of slaughtering by the Ministry of Food, discussions took place with the butchers' representatives and the Council decided to licence such slaughterhouses as appeared necessary to meet the needs of the district.

Accordingly, in addition to the Bacon Factory at Bruton, slaughterhouses have been licensed in Castle Cary, Milborne Port and Wincanton (2).

Despite difficulties, adequate inspection has been maintained. This has, of necessity, involved a reduction of work in other directions, but it is obvious from the table of results that this work is of utmost importance and every effort will be made to maintain this standard.

Every effort is made to inspect all carcasses of animals slaughtered for human consumption.

The results are included in the following table:

	Sheep and Lambs	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Pigs
No. killed	587	204	121	838	10,132
No. inspected	567	203	121	838	10,132
All diseases except tuberculosis:					
Whole carcasses condemned ...	1	—	1	10	26
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	5	15	31	17	*1,115
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with disease other than tuberculosis ...	0.9	7.4	26.4	3.2	*11.0
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcasses condemned ...	—	—	5	—	9
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	—	6	50	—	*488
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with tuber- culosis	—	3.0	45.4	—	*4.8

*These figures are to a small extent estimated as it is impracticable to identify every organ with the carcass.

The total shown for sheep and lambs includes 13 goats.

Miscellaneous Foods

During the year 1,899 tins and packages of various foodstuffs weighing approximately 1¼ tons were condemned, in addition to 1¼ cwts. of various dried fruits.

CYSTICERCUS BOVIS

No cases have been reported.

RODENT CONTROL

No charge is made for operations at dwellings.

Charges, based on the actual cost of operations, continue to be made in respect of business and agricultural premises.

Except in special cases Warfarin is now the sole rodenticide in use.

The sewers, sewage works and refuse tips are all subject to regular treatment.

The summary of operations is given in the following table:

	Class of Property			
	L.A.	D.Hs.	Bus.	Agric.
Prevalence of rats and/or mice ...	6	131	17	16
Number infested by:				
Major	6	53	9	16
Minor	—	67	5	—
Mice only	—	11	3	—
Number of properties inspected ...	6	422	26	24
Number of treatments carried out ...	6	129	17	16

Properties re-treated are not included.

BYELAWS AND TOWN PLANNING

Byelaws

The following tables summarize the action taken during the year:

In abeyance at 31st December, 1953	12	
New applications	216	
	—	228
Approved	213	
Rejected	3	
Withdrawn	3	
	—	219
In abeyance at 31st December, 1954	9	

Infringements :

Relating to lack of notices, etc.	...	...	...	...	15
No. which also included defects ...	...	...	...	...	5
Defective work corrected	...	...	...	...	—
Action incomplete	...	...	...	...	—
No further action ...	...	...	...	...	10
Plans presented ...	...	...	...	...	10

Town Planning

	B/F 1st Jan. 1954	New Appli- cations	Total	No. Ap- proved	No. Re- fused	No. With- drawn	Not Yet Cat.	Per- mitted de- velop- ment	No Deci- sion
Cat. A ...	6	88	94	78	2	6	—	—	8
Cat. B ...	41	89	130	73	12	8	—	—	37
Cat. C ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cat. D ...	14	26	40	30	—	—	—	—	10
Others ...	—	25	25	—	—	—	9	16	—
	61	228	289	181	14	14	9	16	55

Infringements :

25 cases were reported during the year.

BUILDING LICENSING

The following table summarizes the action taken from January 1st to November 10th, when the last restrictions on building work were removed:

Applications brought forward	...	...	...	...	17	
Applications received	...	...	...	...	5	
					—	22
No. of licences issued:						
New houses	...	...	...	...	4	
Additional Units	...	...	...	...	Nil	
Housing Repairs	...	...	...	...	1	
Licences dealt with other than by issue:						
Sent to Ministry of Works			...	...	1	
Withdrawn	...	...	...	...	16	
					—	22

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

R. G. GRAY.

14th June, 1955.

